

140. Unemployment.

MR. P. BALAKRISHNA PILLAI (*Member, Municipal Council, Vaikom*) speaking on the problem of unemployment as it existed in Travancore at the present time traced it primarily to the defects of the system of education obtaining in the country. In his opinion the purely literary kind of education imparted in the schools and colleges of the State left the students unfit to earn their livelihood and made them depend more and more on the chances of Government service. In order to put an end to this state of affairs the member would make the following suggestions :—

- (1) Higher education should be made more costly.
- (2) All vernacular middle and high schools and 50 per cent of the English high schools should be abolished.
- (3) Arts and handicrafts should be taught in all schools.
- (4) Sewing, domestic economy etc., should be taught in girls' schools.
- (5) Technical, industrial and commercial schools should be opened in all parts of the country.

With a view to providing more employment to the educated young men of the country, the member suggested that (1) State Railways should be run by the State itself ; (2) Travancoreans should be employed in connection with the proposed hydro-electric works ; (3) lands should be liberally registered in the names of educated young men particularly of the Nair, Ezhava, and Vellala communities who were adversely affected by the recent social legislations ; (4) agricultural loans should be issued on more liberal terms ; and (5) a full time president must be appointed for the Economic Development Board. It should be the duty of the latter officer to make an economic survey of Travancore and study the local conditions of each taluk.

DEWAN'S REPLY : Mr. Balakrishna Pillai, there is a great deal of what is very sound in your criticism of the educational system obtaining in the State today both in the direction of higher English education and in the direction of mass education in the vernacular. As to the remedial methods you propose, there are, I have no doubt, some here who consider them to be drastic, if not unnecessary. But, nevertheless, I clearly perceive that the correctives you propose to apply are directed to certain wise objectives. Bearing these ideals in view, there is no doubt that a change in method is called for. As I have said before, we are now waiting upon the Unemployment Committee, and until that committee's report is made available to us, I think we can better suspend for the moment the propounding of remedies.

141. Rural development.

MR. JOSEPH MALIAKAL (*Member, Nominated*) speaking on the problem of rural development first dealt with the question of land-taxes and the way in which they affected the ryots. Land-taxes were now collected in four instalments, which meant that the ryots were troubled four times in the year for the tax. Moreover two of the instalments had to be paid in seasons when the money market was very tight. The member therefore suggested that the tax might be made payable in two instalments and that in the two harvesting seasons *viz* Kanni and Medam. When the tax was not paid in time demand notices should be issued and actually served on the parties. Fraudulent services of notices should be severely dealt with. The cost of the demand notice should also be reduced from four chackrams to one chackram. When taxes were paid by the parties, receipts in due form should be given for them, lest there should be double demands and double payments.

The necessity for revising the Puduval rules was brought to the notice of Government a long time ago. But the question was still pending with them. One of the points on which the ryots wanted immediate relief was the registry of Sirkar lands under private occupation. The Revenue authorities mercilessly put up the lands to auction, evicted the occupants and even made them liable to payment of the cost of removing the improvements.

The superior officers of the Land Revenue Department who were supposed to be on Jamabandi work did not come into personal contact with the ryots. They

should, while in camp, ascertain the needs of the people, enquire about any complaints preferred by them, and render them all help. The term Jamabandi was otherwise a misnomer as applied to the work of these officers.

The member next dealt with agriculture, the chief occupation of the ryots in the rural areas. These ryots were still ploughing their lands, sowing their seeds, and reaping their harvest in the same old way in which their ancestors were doing generations ago. The Agricultural Department which Government had organised with a view to improving agriculture had failed to make itself felt by the vast majority of the ryots in the country-side. The department itself was loosely organised. The organisation of the department had to be revised thoroughly. Each taluk or pakuthi should be placed under an Inspector, and the whole State should be divided into two Divisions, each Division being placed under an Assistant Director of Agriculture. The whole department should be under a Director of Agriculture. There should be an experimental farm under each Assistant Director. Experiments on these farms should be conducted entirely in private, lest by the failure of an experiment people should set their faces against it. Agricultural demonstrations should be conducted by the Inspectors in the presence of the landowners. In addition to demonstrations, the department should carry on propaganda work on agriculture by means of pamphlets, lectures etc. The department was now having several manure depots. These should be abolished. Each Inspector should have a cattle farm under him, where demonstrations should be made in cattle-breeding. The Inspector should also be a veterinary doctor.

As regards industries, the member advocated the encouragement of cottage industries and also the development of carpentry, smithery and other handicrafts.

The co-operative movement went a great way to assist rural development, and it was rightly the policy of Government to organise the movement. But the attitude of Government in the matter was misunderstood by many. They demanded Government aid at every step and in doing so forgot that the function of Government was only to initiate the movement. Government were not hereafter to give any kind of concessions to co-operative societies. So also the restrictions imposed by Government on the formation of communal co-operative societies should be removed in so far as the restrictions were of no avail in promoting communal harmony. As regards co-operative societies, more productive and distributive societies were required and not merely credit societies. The latter, instead of relieving, added to the indebtedness of ryots.

In regard to the means of communication in rural areas, the member suggested that ryots' roads should, as soon as they were finished, be taken over by Government. If they were taken up by Government, irresponsible persons would not encroach upon them, as they were otherwise likely to do. In the alignment of these roads also Government might lend the services of their experts.

As regards education, primary education should be encouraged more freely. There should be a primary school in every *kara*. Private agencies should be invited as far as possible to open and manage these schools.

Lastly, greater attention was to be paid by Government to the provision of medical aid in rural areas. Particularly, more midwives had to be trained and stationed in each locality. Local people themselves could be given the training.

DEWANS' REPLY: Mr. Maliakal, I may tell you at once that the question of revising the puduval and poramboke rules is now engaging the attention of the Government.

And coming within the scope of that revision, there will also be your second point the registry of Government lands.

In the collection of land revenue you urge that the ordinary notice should be sent before coercive process is resorted to. I think that is the ordinary arrangement.

MEMBER: It is not served.

DEWAN: It is sent by post.

MEMBER: It is only written and kept.

DEWAN: I must enquire about that.

The question of reducing the price of coercive notices was fully discussed in the Legislative Council and the Government were compelled to accept the conclusion that no change in the present practice is possible.

Your criticism of jamabandi is right in a way; it is not a jamabandi as understood in the neighbouring Presidency in British India, for the simple reason that we do not have an annually changing assessment, but an assessment fixed for thirty years. But whatever may be the jamabandi so called elsewhere, in Travancore it is in reality an efficiency audit of the revenue officials.

You devoted a good deal of your time to the subject of agricultural operations and what you mean really is the introduction of more up-to-date methods of agriculture and encouragement. That is what the Department of Agriculture is striving to do. Your constructive criticism is that the State should be divided into two main agricultural divisions with units in each taluk or even pakuthi with officers who will look after ryots and instruct them in methods of agriculture. I am afraid it is a very large scheme. But sooner or later the question of a closer devotion to the needs of agriculture must be brought about. I have no doubt that your suggestions, which will be on record in the proceedings of this Assembly, will receive consideration when that time comes.

You have heard what I had to say on the subject of cottage industries a little while ago. Also it seems to me that the Government and you think alike upon the present methods of co-operative societies here. And whether it will be possible to stop their credit operations is a very difficult problem to say. We generally ask the department to do societies a good turn and try and infuse into them more methods of operating than mere money-lending.

The ryots' roads rules require amending and I am inclined to agree with you that before a ryots' road is cut it should be properly aligned by experts.

142. Economic development.

MR. JACOB CURIAN (*Member, Nominated*) said that any one who cared to make a perusal of the subjects taken up for representation at the present session of the Assembly had reason for immense gratification. Last year in replying to the representation of a member, the Dewan exhorted the members of the Assembly to eliminate from their representations the chorus of 'my community' 'my community'. He asked them instead to take up the burden of 'my country' 'my country'. That exhortation born of the true spirit of patriotism was faithfully accepted by the members, and as was evident from their representations they had devoted themselves this year solely to subjects relating to the economic and industrial advancement of the country. The Dewan's opening address to the Assembly was conceived in the same spirit and it gave ample proof of the earnestness with which Government were applying themselves to problems of economic regeneration.

Coming to the subject the member said that Travancore, though a thoroughly agricultural country, could not produce her own food materials. She had to depend largely on Burma rice. That was a deplorable state of affairs. The country should be able to produce all the paddy and rice necessary for the consumption of her people. With a view to attaining this object, all the lands in the hills and along the back waters available for cultivation should be assigned to cultivators. As the result of similar representations in former sessions of the Assembly, Government had already sanctioned the assignment of swampy areas in Forest Reserves. But the areas which were actually assigned for cultivation seldom exceeded 50 or 60 acres in each taluk. It was like the mountain labouring and producing a mouse. That kind of close-fistedness in the assignment of public lands should go by the board. Every inch of cultivable land anywhere in the mountains or in the plains should be given away for paddy cultivation.

The next thing necessary for the development of paddy cultivation was the provision of proper means of irrigation. Numerous instances there were of the output of paddy from a field being enormously increased by the opening of a canal or a tank for irrigation. In the Mavelikara taluk itself a canal was recently opened under